

EXHIBIT 000



YAMAHA - Born Again!

The Goods Are Good Enough to Dominate the Market

Story by Kent Lester. Photos by CJ Ramstad, Mark Lester & YMC

It's been more than twenty years since Yamaha sales led the snowmobile industry - a long time. So long, many snowmobilers don't even remember.

Today, Yamaha dominates in so many other motorsport markets, it's curious the company hasn't carried over the same success in snowmobiling. Street bikes, dirt bikes, ATVs, outboards all wear Yamaha's label as a leader. In these categories, if the Big Y isn't number one, the competition is definitely hearing footsteps.

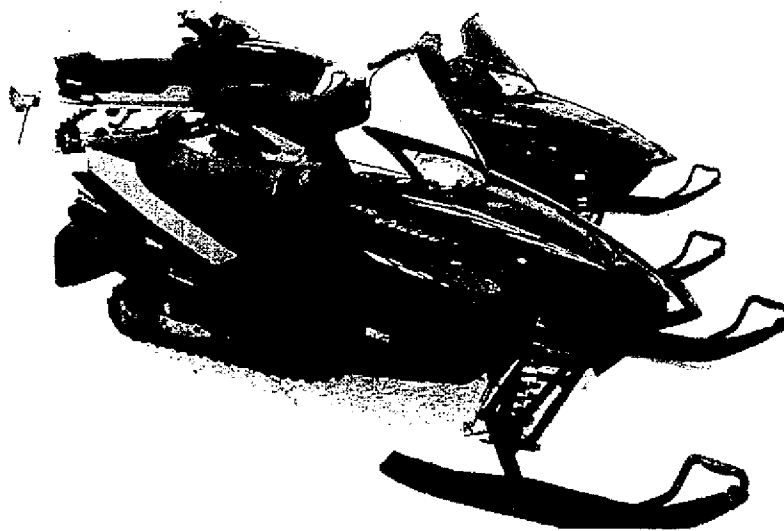
Truth is, the company's engineering resources are staggering and its name is probably one of the top ten most recognizable brands in the world. Perhaps in the snowmobile business, what might have been lacking was the corporate will to be at the top. But something clicked this year. Yamaha has suddenly grown teeth. Not only is the wolf to lead evident, Yamaha's 2006 snowmobile technology says things are going to change in the industry... and change fast!

To fully understand the impact the 2006 Yamahas will have on the market, you need to look back to last year. Years from now, when the history books are written and people remember when Yamaha's snowmobiling image changed, MY2005 will be the apex of the corner. No, it wasn't the company's first 4-stroke, the 2003 RX-L, that lunged the door. The biggest impact from Yamaha's product line has come from *crutch* suspension.

Last year's Vector and RX-L variations offered extremely competitive suspension quality for the first time in many years and this improvement has had a huge effect on the public's perception of the product.

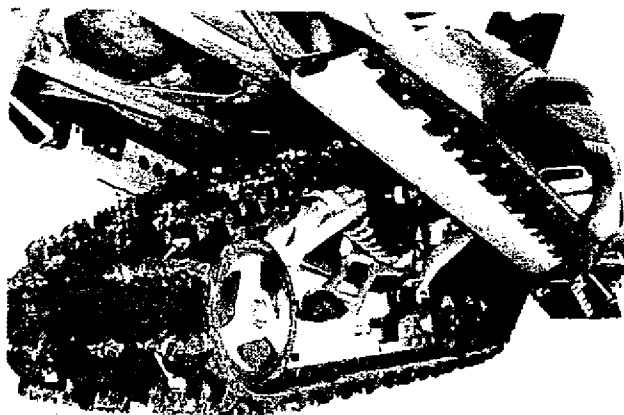
Vector Is Back

The plush riding Vector, priced the same for 2006, will continue to win over a legion of new converts to 4-stroke snowmobiling in its second



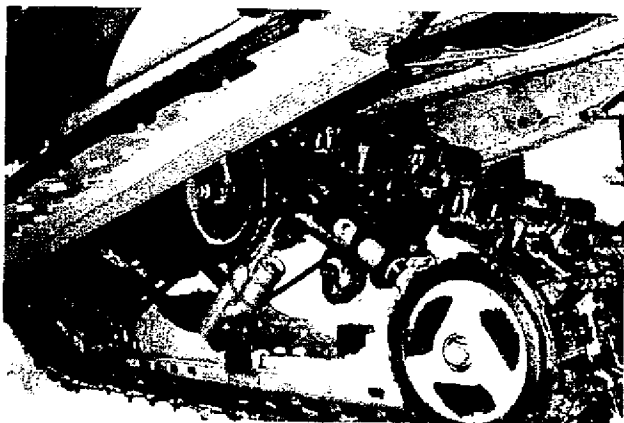
TOP: Big changes. The RX-L is replaced with a new line-up of rider forward sleds called Apex. Pictured here is the new Apex GT with Ohlins electronic compression damping control and GYT-R piggyback shocks up front.

ABOVE: The Vector is available in three variations this year. The standard version is almost unchanged but a step up to the Vector ER nets you reverse and a swap to the plush and adjustable Monoshock RA skidframe used in last year's RX-L. Vector GT models get all the above plus GYT-R piggyback shocks up front. The Rage (shown at rear) gets a new 136 inch version of the Mono skid.



LEFT: Yamaha's Monoshock skid with tunnel mounted damping control was a big hit last year and has been adapted to all Apex and Altax models and most Vectors for 2006

LOWER LEFT: The very competent dual shock, torsion spring Pro-Active skid from last year's Vector is used on standard versions of the Vector and the new Nytro.



want superior ride compliance.

The Vector series sleds are killer value, priced close to the middle of the market right against the competition's entry and "Three" offerings. The selling factor here is *compliance* - or, rather, lack of it. After a full season of use and abuse, we stand firm on the endorsement we gave the Vector last year. Those who invest here are buying one of the finest trail riding snowmobiles on the market - but none!

Nytro... Glistening

Remember we said Yamaha was born again? Here's a perfect example. The new Nytro has flames and skull graphics, unembarrassed yellow accents... and a gnarly attitude.

Yamaha knows there's a market for a more aggressive, rider forward sled in this market. The engineers have moved the rider ahead about four inches by stuffing and reshaping the front of the seat and adding a tall handlebar riser, effectively moving the rider's hands ahead several inches. The repositioning allows the rider to move forward on the taller seat comfortably. The flat style, hooker bar positioning is absolutely perfect and our test riders were impressed with how well the Vector chassis adapts to stand-up riding and rider-forward seating. Stand-up transitions are easy and comfortable and the handling is much tauter and responsive with the rider moved up. Some of this is because of the Vector's reasonable weight and the mass centralization built-in from the laid-back placement of its engine.

Although the 97 cc 4-stroke triple is unaltered, gearing has been

year of production. The baseline electric start Vector is a carbon copy of last year, but the tempting, new Vector ER is a sled with serious ring. Not only is reverse included with this model but the RX-1 derived Monoshock RA adjustable skidframe is added as part of the ER upgrade. This skid shows up in a long list of 2006 Yamaha sleds and delivers premium ride with a wide range of adjustability from an easy-to-use tunnel mounted dial control. Last year's Vector was a much tighter package than the RX-1 with lower weight, better handling and excellent ride from a torsion spring, dual shock skid. The RX-1 pirated Monoshock skid, however, completely revolutionizes its personality and leaves no doubt this is the best Yamaha rear suspension for hardcore trail users.

Another new model, the Vector GT, offers all the features of the Vector ER plus slick colors and graphics and an upgrade to Yamaha GYT-R reservoir gas shocks up front. The GT moniker stands for Geomorph Trail and this sled is targeted at more aggressive long distance riders who

RIGHT: The Vector ER, GT and the Nytro all feature widened running boards with special grips for boot traction. The Nytro features rider-forward seating and some precious metal tricks to reduce weight.





ABOVE: A new handlebar riser and flat, hooker bars make the Nytro an ideal stand-up riding sled while completely altering its sit-down ergonomics.



LEFT & BELOW: Lots of shiny paint and accents make the view over the Apex's handlebars like a bullet bike. The rider has been moved ahead six inches to a very comfortable position. An all-new digital instrument cluster provides plenty of data including a clock and, on the Apex GT, compression damping read-outs.

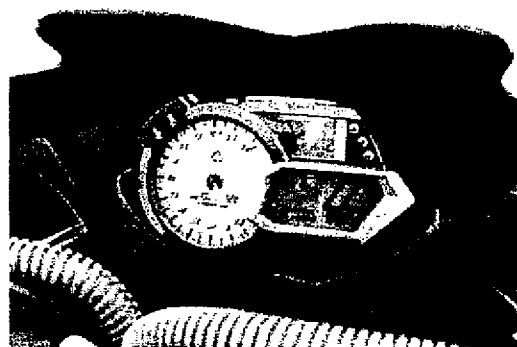
dropped down a tooth for better gacing and quicker acceleration. Up front, a set of Fox Float air shocks handle the bumps. Yamaha decided to utilize a revised version of the Vector dual shock, torsion sprung skidframe on the Nytro, called Pro-Action CK, and added a SQQ piggyback air shock to better suit the more forward positioning of the rider.

Ride quality is a notch firmer but nowhere near stuff, performing competently at low speeds through bumps. When the going gets really rough and speeds increase, the rider can take bumps standing, REV-style, or remain seated while the premium front and rear ends soak up the junk. The net result is a sled that shows there can be a relevant improvement in handling uti-

lizing the basics of a modern chassis and making adjustments to seating and hand position. Its ergonomics work incredibly well and the Nytro is worlds apart from a standard Vector both in the way it feels and the way it performs. Definitely add this one to your must-see list this year.

And Now... Something Completely Different!

Yamaha wasn't kidding when they said this was going to be a



Yamaha added a redesigned cylinder head, designed a stronger, lighter crankshaft and then erased more weight with a list of new magnesium parts. The second generation 998cc, 4-cylinder 4-stroke is now fuel injected using a Bosch-Mikuni hybrid setup. Horsepower is up a claimed eight ponies and EFI makes this mill absolutely sing. Throttle tip-in is immediate and as smooth as silk. Yamaha engineers are quick to add that EFI was part of the Apex plan from the beginning and was not required to meet 2006 EPA standards. In fact, both the Vector and the RX-1 engines have met 2006 pollution requirements from the beginning. EFI was added for one reason: Better performance.

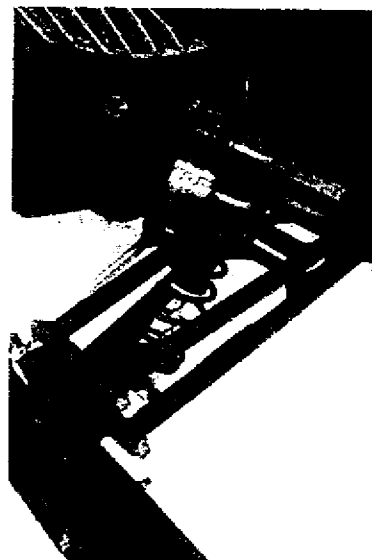
It's no secret early versions of the RX-1 presented some handling challenges. The retaking of this chassis has resulted in a 150-horsepower 4-stroke that handles in the same league as the most recent big-bore 2-stroke competition. The Apex actually out-handles some big-inch sleds we've been very kind to in our editorial of



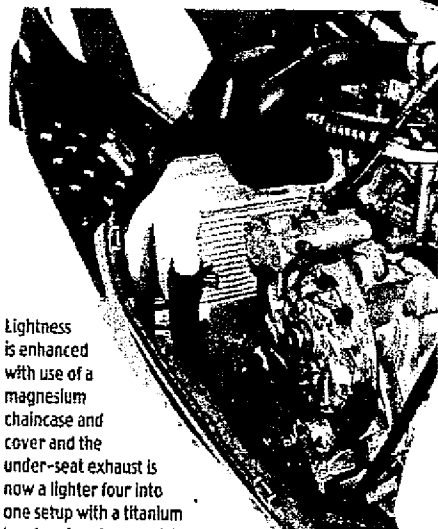
The Apex RTX offers a long list of weight reduction features, big bump suspension calibration and Fox Floats up front.



The stand-up riding position of the new chassis is demonstrated on the 136-inch tracked Attak.



TOP RIGHT: GYT-R internal floating piston gas shocks with piggyback reservoirs (above) are used on several models this year. You'll also see Fox Floats, KYB gas and Ohlins shocks throughout the model line-up. Last year's Vector wishbone geometry with lower CG and higher roll center is used on all trail targeted Apex and Attak models.



Lightness is enhanced with use of a magnesium chaincase and cover and the under-seat exhaust is now a lighter four into one setup with a titanium header pipe. Another 2.5 pounds was shaved with a lighter, faster spinning crankshaft. A bit of fat was added with the tiny aluminum radiator but, overall, the Apex is considerably lighter than the 2005 RX-1. Last year's 4-piston hydraulic brake is standard on the Apex.

work with attractive motorcycle styling cues. A gorgeous, redesigned digital instrument cluster offering massive info is also part of the Apex package.

There are three versions of the Apex for 2006. The Apex ER uses KYB rebuildable aluminum gas shocks up front in tandem with the Monoshock adjustable skid. The hooker handlebars leave wires, hydraulic lines and cables exposed in a very un-Yamaha-like way and the windshield is radical looking but functional. Joining the Apex fleet are the RTX (Rough Trail) and the GT (Groomed Trail).

late. Yamaha has seen the benefits of rider-forward positioning in this chassis and moved the rider forward a full six inches from last year's RX-1. The result is a seating position similar to Ski-Doo's Mach Z; a position we feel is near-perfect for the highest percentage of riders seeking comfort while moving further forward.

With the Apex, there's no cramping - the knees are positioned above the ankles and the rider's back is perched almost vertical. The riser equipped bars are at exactly the right height and the driver is surrounded by new, restyled body-

RIGHT: Both the Vector Mountain and the new Apex Mountain get a 2.25-inch deep, 162 x 16-inch wide track this year.



The RTX has funky paint and graphics and uses Fox Floats up front. The focus here is on weight. The Yamaha tweaked Fox air shocks are light and the Monoshock adjustable skid is calibrated for aggressive bump riding. Yamaha has wisely chosen to keep the ride on the plush side at the softest settings allowing the rider to choose the level of damping resistance required. With all the adjustment available using the dial control on the tunnel, riders can max out the full extent of the travel and still get versatility for different levels of terrain without tooth parring results.

The Apex GT has a nifty Ohlins electronically adjustable shock in the rear to change compression dampening from the handlebars. Just punch the "mode" button on the digital display and move the left handlebar heater switch up or down to make alterations. A bar graph on the display indicates the ride setting chosen. Shok. Up front, GYT-R compression adjustable piggybackers handle any remaining pain. Our riders loved the features of the GT and predict it will be the most popular Apex for 2006.